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Contents

Editorial Notes	
— On Recording Quality	257
Gabriel Faure — Part I	
— Philip L. Miller	259
Personal Preference	
— Jerome Pastene	265
From Duet to Sextet — Part 10	
— Stephen Fassett	268
Record Notes and Reviews	270

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Editorial Notes

Differences in opinion regarding recording characteristics are, we feel certain, often bewildering to record buyers. The quality of commercial machines varies greatly and what sounds good on one machine may not on another. The same holds true on custom-built equipment. Where the average commercial machine is concerned, those who play it at a loud volume usually fare better than those who endeavor to turn down the volume control. Only on the finest built equipment can one turn down the volume and retain quality in performance. This is the test of a good machine. There are to our way of thinking several important points in regard to reproduction for which to look: clarity of detail, balance of ensemble, and realistic tonal quality. When one finds a recording that meets with these three requirements, one is properly impressed and rates it as good. But if we find these qualities existent in a recording, we cannot be assured that all our readers will agree with us when they hear it on their own equipment. We naturally employ high fidelity reproduction, reproduction that allows flexibility in controls and permits us to obtain an idea of how well a recording can sound.

There are a lot of people whose ears are conditioned to recording characteristics of a few years back. To them many of the finest modern recordings (speaking from the reproductive angle only) are not as pleasing. In line with others, a reader recently wrote: "My single complaint about most recent records (and especially about domestic ones) is that they are recorded too loudly." In the next sentence, he states that he likes better most foreign recordings, but complains that many have a higher surface sound. The higher level of recording in the past few years has helped considerably to do away with surface noise; it has other features over

the lower level employed some years back which we might better leave to the technical experts to describe at some later date.

If you listen to a recording in a dealer's booth and think that we are completely wrong in our estimation of its reproduction, it might be well to request permission to try out that disc on your own equipment. "More than 95 per cent of the recordings being issued today," states one engineer of our acquaintance, "can be made to sound well. It is a matter of tone controls. If a person has not bass and treble controls on his machine, he is very apt to run into different kinds of problems in reproducing different recordings. Foreign records will sound 'boomy' because they have more bass than domestic ones (the reader is referred to Gordon Mercer's article, *Revolution in Recording*, in our June 1945 issue.), and the clarity of the upper frequencies may be clouded. Domestic recordings that have shrill high frequencies will sound badly on machines not equipped with a high control which permits attenuation. Many people who build, or have had built, so-called high-fidelity equipment have not had their machines properly aligned and they find a lot of recordings overly shrill. The trouble, more often than not lies with their equipment, and not with the recordings in question."

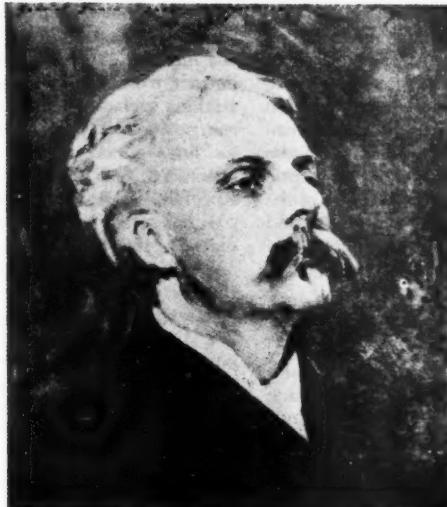
Apparently the laymen is not alone in his failure to get all recordings to reproduce satisfactorily. We have had some very conflicting statements from the technical boys, and it is our contention that when they run into a problem of reproduction they lay the blame at the door of the recorders despite the fact that others have overcome the same problem. Perhaps the moral of all this is—do not look for mutual agreement on reproductive characteristics, and if you find yourself in disagreement with a friend or reviewer do not simply assume that he is in the wrong. It is our contention that the best arrangement for the record buyer is to acquire the rights to take home a recording and try it out for satisfactory reproductive qualities.

Mr. D. L. Julian, who has contributed in the past some interesting copy on technical matters, writes us recently as follows: "The British Decca are really in a class by themselves as to frequency range and low distortion level; and they can properly be labelled as 'amazing', if one has the equipment to do

them justice. On some commercial machines, where the frequency range is reduced to a third of what is in the record, I am told, the reproduction sounds muffled and unclear. [This may well be a case of a lack of the requisite bass control which permits bass reduction.—E.] Yet, with all their good points, I do not think they are to date the complete fulfillment of all that is promised. Again, the conductors and orchestras now recording for Decca are in the majority hardly in a class with the best domestic conductors and orchestras; and it is my opinion that the company would do well to specialize on more modern composers (from Tchaikovsky on), and leave the classic compositions to more capable sources. These records, made in England, appear to me to be rather poorly manufactured, and are pressed too thin (so thin as to constitute structural fragility and warping). At the present time, I believe U. S. manufacturers (Victor and Columbia, at any rate) are using better materials than English companies; but I still think the latter on the whole better manufactured, and may wear more satisfactorily. I would say that the real difficulty of American manufacture is that the pressing cycle is accelerated too much. This sort of thing allows a disc to cool too quickly from its plastic state, with the result that the finished product is overly brittle. There are indications too that sometimes too many records are pressed with the same master, which of course makes for high surface noises. I have known friends to acquire a set that was smooth and free from surface and the discs were in no way brittle, and I have acquired the same set evidently from a later pressing only to have brittle records and surface noise. Some domestic recordings have, to my ears, too much high frequency reflection, which can be peculiarly unpleasant at high volume levels. I prefer live acoustics where the low frequencies bounce back—like a tennis ball lightly thrown; but I do not care for high frequencies being shot back—like machine gun bullets ricochetting off of a hard surface. There is another characteristic to domestic records that I find undesirable—this I call 'clarity disintergration'. And another is excessive monitoring."

A St. Louis technician states, in connection with the above remarks on "high fre-

(Continued on page 264)



Fauré from a portrait
by John Singer Sargent

G A B R I E L F A U R É

A Belated Tribute

By Philip L. Miller

In May 1945 occurred the centenary of Gabriel Fauré's birth, and, as is customary on such occasions, writers of music here and abroad reopened his "case," or re-evaluated his music. Since some years ago in these pages, it was my privilege to make a modest study of the works of this most lovable of composers, the editor did me the honor of delaying his anniversary tribute until such time as I might be able to revisit Fauré. A good deal has happened to the world, and to me personally, since 1936 when my first impressions were published; I approached my task, therefore, with the kind of interest which comes of not being sure that an old enthusiasm can be recaptured. Let me say at once that for me the music of Fauré has not faded, but rather taken on a greater warmth and vitality even as I have grown in my understanding of it. To be sure some

of the weaker works now seem to me even less consequential than formerly; but a composer does not stand or fall by his lesser music.

It often seems unfortunate that articles and books have to be written about music and composers, for they inevitably have one bad consequence—they make both friends and enemies by filling the heads of their readers with all sorts of preconceived notions. On the other hand, so comparatively few of us are equipped to draw our own conclusions by analysis and study, or even repeated hearings, that without such writing only the most obvious music could make its way. Fauré is a good case in point. To how many of us is his music readily available? A fairly generous amount has been put within our reach by means of records, to be sure, but these are never featured by the manufac-

turers, and in this day of limited stocks many Fauré recordings have become real collectors' items. Meanwhile we can read in Láng's *Music in Western Civilization* that Fauré, so much admired by his countrymen, seems to the German or the American simply a salon composer. Or, on the other hand, we can find it in Gerald Abraham's *A Hundred Years of Music* that Fauré's music has a "gentle strength, a poetry all its own." Among the writers who have considered him we can find adulation, condescension and indifference. For the most part one either adores or ignores Fauré.

New Viewpoints

The centennial brought forth some new points of view. Norman Suckling, writing in *The Music Review* for May 1945, gives us, for a background to his study, such a blanket statement as this: "There was not one composer writing between 1820 and 1870 whose work it is possible for a mind of any fineness of perception to admire without considerable reservations . . ." And this: "As a songwriter he established, even more than his contemporary Duparc, the type of *mélodie* whose great virtue, over against the 19th century German *lied*, is that it neither needs nor invites the outward semblance of 'expression' in order to be emotionally telling, but asks purely for a performance that shall realize what is implicit in its musical substance—with which indeed the generally accepted adjuncts of 'expressive' vocalism would merely interfere."

In the first place, can anyone so out of sympathy with the period which produced Fauré really appreciate the composer's stature as a man of his times or indeed of all times? We may as well remember that the very greatest composers may not be admired without some or even "considerable reservations." As to Mr. Suckling's remarks about the lack of a need for "interpretation" in the songs of Fauré, while perfectly true, they overlook the fact that they are also true of the German *lieder* with which he contrasts these *mélodies*—that the common failure to understand this is responsible for most of the atrocities which have been committed in the name of *lieder-singing*.

But is it necessary, in considering French song, to contrast it with the German *lied*? Surely the world of music is big enough for

songs in both languages (and it is in the languages that we must seek for perhaps the really fundamental differences between them): the mastery of Fauré need not in any way detract from the greatness of Schubert, of Brahms and of Hugo Wolf. However, we cannot hope to understand Fauré while overlooking Gounod and Franck and Debussy, or indeed such followers of his as Ravel, Koechlin, Enesco and Roger-Ducasse.

It has often been said that Fauré is an essentially French taste, that his music does not have what it takes to interest those who think in another language. Plainly, it seems to me, there is a grain of truth in this theory. We could hardly hope to comprehend the music of so subtle a songwriter as Fauré without at least some knowledge of the poems which inspired him. No more could one to whom French thought and French music were a closed book hope to arrive at a full appreciation of Debussy's *Après-Midi d'un Faune*, or indeed of the organ works of César Franck. And to follow out this line of thought, it is by our very inability ever to come to the end of our study of a great work of art that we can account for the enduring freshness of that work. I do not believe that the love of Fauré's music is out of the reach of anyone who has the desire and the perseverance to get to know it.

The Later Songs

Leslie Orrey, writing in the same issue of the *Music Review*, has this to say of the later songs: "There is nothing provincial about them—that is to say, their excellence does not consist merely in clothing the French language in the finest and most fitting raiment. No doubt an intimate understanding of French is a tremendous help towards their appreciation, just as a knowledge of German adds to the pleasure of Schubert, Brahms and Wolf. But a great song is more than the matching of words with 'just note and accent': there must be a universal appeal which transcends mere national and linguistic boundaries, and it is not too much to claim just this quality for these fine songs of Gabriel Fauré."

What then are some of the characteristics of the style which sets this man's music apart from that of other composers? Let us begin by mentioning some of the influences which went into the making of this style. Most

strongly, in the piano pieces and in the piano parts of the songs, we feel Fauré's descent from such romantics as Schuman and Chopin. Melodically he stems, as do practically all his modern compatriots to a greater or lesser degree, from Gounod, but with a strong admixture of plainsong. He leans toward modality in his melodies and in his harmonies, and for these he provides a background often of arpeggio figures in subtly worked-out cross rhythms, or not infrequently of plain block harmonies. These characteristics remained to a large extent constant throughout his career, though he traveled a long way from his facile Op. 1, no. 1 (*Le Papillon et la Fleur*) to the bare and almost austere economy of Op. 121, the string quartet finished only two days before his death. His development was first an enrichment of the means he had at hand, and later a continual striving for ever greater musical economy. Through it all his thought was essentially contrapuntal rather than harmonic: from first to last his works are marked by a strong bass line and by marvelously beautiful cadences. Certain devices occur again and again in his music—his use of the tritone, so auspiciously inaugurated in *Lydia* (appropriately in the Lydian mode), his penchant for mediant harmonies and augmented triads, his effective use of sequences and his preference for scale lines and rather short intervals.

His Development Revealed

It is in his vocal style that we can trace his development most clearly, and his changing taste in poets is not unrelated to this. Many of the earlier songs are settings of that type of graceful compliment so common in romantic poetry, especially French poetry. Following the fashions of his day, he begins by setting to music some not too consequential verses of Victor Hugo, thence proceeding to Théophile Gautier, Romain Bussine, Leconte de Lisle, Baudelaire and others. In many of these early songs he is feeling his way, but such is his natural flair for song writing that each work emerges for better or for worse generally comparable in stature to the poem he has set.

The songs divide themselves conveniently into periods, each corresponding to its publication in the three general collections and the four independent song cycles. The second volume of *Mélodies* reveals the composer in

his maturity. And here one finds the poets with whose names his own is most memorably associated—Armand Silvestre and Paul Verlaine. In these songs, as in the Verlaine cycle *La Bonne Chanson*, the voice moves freely and easily through the subtleties of word setting and the piano style is as rich and flowing as it is in the chamber music and piano solos. In place of his earlier preference for straight strophic setting, we now find him inclined toward the three-part song form, and with this tendency we quite naturally note a deeper penetration into the spirit of the poems. Although he always prefers syllabic and lyrical setting, we now find an occasional use of melisma. Occasionally too we find him using the device of repeated notes within his melody. Very rarely in his works do we find the kind of musical extension which involves repeating lines of the poetry.

A Prevailing Magic

The tendencies of the second volume of *Mélodies* are carried still further in the third, and then, with the cycles *La Chanson d'Eve*, *Le Jardin Clos*, *Mirages*, and *L'Horizon Chimérique*, the composer aims more and more at simplification and economy. But the old magic is still there: the man who could make such stunning effects with the final lines of the songs in *La Bonne Chanson* is able to thrill us in the same way in *Le Jardin Clos*, and perhaps it should be added that for all the scarcity of notes on the pages of these later songs, they are by no means easy to sing or to play. So rarely have they been performed that few of us have had the opportunity to admire their subtleties.

As has been said, the characteristics of Fauré's piano style are very much the same in his songs as in the solos for that instrument. The same, again, may be said of the chamber music in which the piano plays a part—all of his chamber music, that is, with the exception of the final string quartet. A great deal has been written about his lack of interest in the orchestra, and this has been accounted for by the theory that he had no ear for musical qualities and colors, but worked solely to get the most from his mastery of harmony and form. Norman Suckling has another theory: "Even his reluctance to orchestrate," he writes, "may be traceable rather to a lack of sympathy with 19th-century orchestral developments than to any

fúndamental incapacity for instrumentation. The technique of the century, from Beethoven onwards, had tended to fuse orchestral timbres rather than to differentiate them." It is a fact that Fauré used to farm out the instrumentation of his works (amazingly enough the *Pelléas et Mélisande* music was orchestrated by Koechlin) and we cannot always be sure which of his works he did orchestrate himself. If the *Ballade*, Op. 19 is his own, as it is believed to be, it is surely a skillful enough job, and, to name only one more example, the man who conceived the entrance of the trumpets in the *Sanctus* of the *Requiem* was not without imagination or skill in the use of instruments.

An Impressive List

The list of Fauré recordings, past and present, adds up to something rather impressive. Of course most of them were made in France, but before the War the domestic companies, especially Columbia, gave us a generous sample in their re-pressings. Most of the major works have been available at one time or another, the most conspicuous gap being the piano quartet, Op. 45. (This has been recently recorded, I understand, in France). Among the songs the lack of the cycles *La Chanson d'Eve* and *Le Jardin Clos* is serious, but for the most part the omissions are not vital. In reviewing the existing recordings I must pass over a considerable number, mostly released in France during the early years of the War, as I have not had an opportunity to hear them. Even so the list is a rather impressive one. Because of the uncertainty of the catalogues these days I shall not attempt to designate which recordings are and which are not available.

The earliest of the songs recorded is Op. 2, no. 1, *Dans les Ruines d'une Abbaye*, a well-nigh perfect setting of a wisely ironic poem of Victor Hugo, in which the poet's contrast between the symbolism of the ruined convent and the somber life which used to be lived there with the couple of young lovers who now laugh and play among the ruined arches and pillars, is happily reflected in the light-hearted vocal line and the quiet movement of the piano part. The perfect musical balancing of the poem's irregular verse structure is also notable. Of the three recordings I know of this song (only Maggie Teyte's is at present available) by far the most pen-

etrating is that of Povla Frijs (Victor 1653 or HMV DA 1324) who underlines every important word and inflection without ever losing the rhythmic flow of the music. When I heard her last sing the song Mme. Frijs picked up the time even more and divided the measures into twos rather than sixes, with strikingly novel and magical effect. An earlier recording by M. Marcellin (HMV P 838) is undistinguished and vocally unsteady. Miss Teyte, perhaps in an effort to sing "with expression" misses the very essential flow of the song. To me this is probably her least satisfactory record (HMV DA 1810).

The next recorded song is typical of one side of Fauré—typical, indeed, of his time. It is the graceful and not too consequential *Sérénade Toscane*, a setting of a slight verse by Romain Bussine, the poet of the similar but more famous and definitely superior *Après un Rêve*. Perhaps the most striking thing about this *Sérénade* is that despite its Italianate sentiment it is quite free of sentimentality. It has been recorded by Georges Thill, and performance and recording are in line with the song's essential healthiness (Columbia 416M). The setting is a kind of dialogue between the voice and the right hand of the piano part, which intertwine pleasantly enough against a background of rolled chords. Quite different, yet equally typical of the composer, is the *Lamento*, or *Chanson du Pêcheur*, for which the inspiration was furnished by Théophile Gauthier. And here Fauré looks ahead to the economy of the later songs, being content with a simple arpeggio accompaniment to a sort of semi-recitative in alternate threes and twos. The poem is a dramatic one, but it is by no means lacking in melodic appeal. The rhythmic patterns are constant throughout, and the flow of the voice part is characteristic—perhaps it is the refrain which sets the song apart from others of its composer. Not among the great songs, the *Lamento* is still a good sample, and it has been well sung and recorded by the distinguished French baritone Charles Panzéra (HMV DA 4909).

"Lydia"

But the gem of the early songs is *Lydia*. Certainly among the most famous of the Fauré works, it is still far from hackneyed, and it bears repetition uncommonly well.

Among the three recordings of *Lydia* in my collection it is hard to make a choice. The version of Roger Bourdin (Odeon 188.634) is marked by outstandingly beautiful diction, fine and appealing voice. One of the proofs of distinguished phrasing is the feeling of compulsion to breathe with the singer as we listen, and I find myself doing this with Bourdin. Rather less leisurely in tempo, but equally straight and healthy is the performance of Panzéra (Victor 1897, in M-478). Perhaps there is just a bit more pointing of the words here—notice particularly the line *Que je puisse mourir*—and the voice is lighter, but the honors are about equally divided. Maggie Teyte, for her part, “talks” the song less than the two baritones, and her record gives the impression of a rather high *tessitura*, but there is magic in her treatment of the triplets which come towards the end of each of the two stanzas (HMV DA 1831).

The first of Fauré's Baudelaire settings, *Chant d'Automne*, is broader in conception than the songs which have preceded it. It also shows a more careful working out, for here the composer abandons his customary strophic setting, and pictures to the full the desolation of the poem. There exists a recording of this song made by Pierre de Seyguieres with Yvonne Vallier at the piano (Columbia DFX 220) but I have not succeeded in hearing it.

Rather inexplicable is the neglect of *L'Absent*, a big dramatic setting of a Victor Hugo poem. One would expect it to be a sure success for any singer with imagination; nevertheless, I have yet to hear a performance of it. On the other hand, though *Après un Rêve* is full of pitfalls for the unskilled vocalist, there is hardly an amateur unwilling to try it. An interesting comparison may be made between the two recordings of this song by Maggie Teyte, the one made for Decca some years ago (40300) and the other a Victor-pre-pressing (10-1002, in M-895) from a comparatively recent HMV (DA 1777). As with the triplets in *Lydia*, the soprano performs a miracle with those in this flowing melody, especially in the Decca version. In the earlier disc everything seems to come off exactly as it should: there is just enough *rubato*, and the tempo is right. The later record seems just a bit rushed, though the tone is lovely throughout, and of course the recording is superior. Another good per-

formance is scored by Géorges Thrill (Columbia LF 125) though it is rather straight and not particularly colorful. Also Pan éra (HMV DA 4911), Ninon Vallin (Pathé X 93081), and Eidé Noréna (HMV DA 4874) have made distinguished records of this song. The Vallin disc, which won the *Candide Grand Prix* in 1934, is coupled with *Au bord de l'eau*, another flowing melody in which the voice alternated with the right hand of the piano.

A curious record (Columbia BF 22) is that of the *Tarantelle*, a duet originally written for two sopranos, but here sung with the parts reversed by mezzo-soprano and tenor, Germaine Cernay and René Talba. The song is not important in any sense, but because of its hectic pace its performance is a *tour de force*; it comes off on this disc.

There have been several recordings of the well-known *Sonata, Op. 13*. As a performance perhaps the best of them was the early Victor set by Thibaud and Cortot (Victor 8086-88). More up to date is the set by Denise Soriano and Magda Tagliaferro (Pathé PAT 3-5) which won the *Candide Grand Prix* in 1934. However, Victor has had two still newer versions, the better of which seems to be that of Jascha Heifetz and Emanuel Bay (M-328) in which a lack of the fire of genius is made up for by the violinist's lovely tone and general competence. The piano comes off second best in reproduction. Better recorded but too elastically played for my taste is the set of Mischa Elman and Leopold Mittleman (Victor M-895). While commanding this popular violinist for electing to play such a work, we must regret the over-ripeness of his tone and his old tendency to slide from note to note.

The student of the Fauré songs will find plenty to study and enjoy in the *Quartet for piano and strings, Op. 15*. Here are the composer's gift of melody and his rhapsodic piano style full blown and endlessly vital. Full of vitality too is the playing of Robert Casadesus and the members of the Calvet Quartet who have recorded this work for Columbia (M-255). There may be a slight edge in favor of the Victor set of Elaine Zurfluh-Tenrock, Henri Merckel, Alice Merckel and G. Marchesini (M-594) from a purely mechanical point of view, but the performance seems to me definitely less arresting.

The *Berceuse, Op. 16*, for violin and piano,

is a slight but elegant trifle. I am not familiar with the various modern recordings of this piece, but I cherish an old one which seems to me the most interesting disc made by the great Eugen Ysaye (Columbia 36519). I am told the Denise Soriano disc (Pathé PAT 155) is worth acquiring.

The song *Ici-bas* is unusual in Fauré in that he uses a common device of other composers in repeating the last line of each stanza for emphasis. The song is a kind of *arioso*, rather declamatory in style and again economical in the piano background. Maggie Teyte has successfully captured its mood (HMV DA 1830). One could hardly call *Noël* a masterpiece, yet its good healthy melody and its piano part like tolling bells, with the rather naive charm of the poem, make it extremely pleasant listening. The Thill recording is good. (Columbia 4218M).

Far more important, yet on the face of it extremely slight, is the first song of the second volume of *Mélodies—Nell*—and we have on records perhaps the definitive performance. The song is a great favorite with Povla Frijs and with her audiences. The singer's handling of the tops of the phrases, and the feathery lightness of the whole line of the song, not to mention the kaleidoscopic shifting of the accompanying harmonies in Mr. Dougherty's playing of the piano part and his skillful bringing out of the bass line, make this record a little masterpiece (Victor 2078, in set M-668). There is much more freedom here than we realize, but not nearly so much as Maggie Teyte indulges in (HMV DA 1831). Here we miss the lightness of the Frijs conception.

It is Frijs again who carries off the honors in *Automne* (Victor 18053, in M-789) though she is given formidable competition by Panzéra (HMV DA 4911) and Vallin (Decca 20323). Frijs's record is a fine example of the art of conveying the mood of a song simply by tone quality, for we need no more than the sound of her voice to make us feel the tragic despair of this moving song. The postlude is a triumph for Celius Dougherty.

Editorial Notes

(Continued from page 258)

quency reflection", or—as he puts it—the

pre-emphasis given the highs in some modern recordings, that they are bound to sound worse with a linear response pickup. "On the average machine they sound much better, as the average pickup, amplifier and speaker cut-off equally so that the acoustical response is about what is to be desired. Presume the companies doing this sort of thing are justified in playing to the masses but it makes us high fidelity boys tear our hair at times. If only the recorders would adopt some sort of code or number to incorporate on the label to tell us how much pre-emphasis was used in recording at what frequencies, etc., we might be able to set our controls better."

* * *

We have been striving for several months to get together with our technical advisers on some recommendations for assembling high fidelity equipment in the home. This is not as easy as it may seem to some. Before doing this, we want to establish some sort of mutual agreement among the technical boys. Several are reluctant to have the article written as yet, because, as they say, several new developments are in the offing which may be of value to us in our recommendations. Thus, Garrard expects to market in the near future a high-fidelity magnetic pickup with an extended frequency range to 10,000 c.p.s., a pickup which may come under serious consideration. There is, of course, the variable reluctance pickup of General Electric which has been widely praised and which Lafayette Radio, among others, has adopted in its new home assembly equipment. This pickup is used on G.E. machines, but its range there is not fully utilized according to several engineers of our acquaintance. The new G. E. pickup requires a preamplifier system which increases its cost. It also requires the right kind of tone arm, and since G. E. is only supplying the head at present, only an expert can mount this pickup for best performance. Several engineers of our acquaintance do not favor the pre-amplifier design given out by the manufacturers with the head; they claim it reduces its potential top frequencies. Lafayette engineers employ a preamplification system which, they claim, extends the pickup's range to well over 10,000 c.p.s. Control compensation is added to permit the cut-off of intensified highs in recording.



PERSONAL PREFERENCES

By Jerome Pastene

Mr. Pastene, who writes the latest in our series of "Personal Preference", is an old and valued contributor from Boston. Now in Germany with the American Occupation Forces, he is in charge of music and entertainment in the Frankfort section.

I have long believed, and I still believe, that under normal living conditions it would not be possible for me to choose from my large collection those few which I could include in these few paragraphs. However, separation from my favorites during military service, the scarcity of other records in a devastated Germany, and that fact that I deal now with 'live', not 'canned', music, have given me the perspective which I otherwise would have lacked, and so a few discs which I have found truly outstanding still point up over the horizon of my memories, while lesser things have long since disappeared below the rim. There are, of course, some new recordings included in this list, which I have come to know comparatively recently, but I feel confident that the appeal which I find in them is not merely of the moment.

It is, of course, a disadvantage to appear late in this series; with certain recordings of such unique appeal that they are bound to appear on almost every list, it is a temptation to repeat the mention of some sets which have already been reviewed here. I would, for instance, have liked to list the

Verdi *Requiem* and Mozart's *Zauberflöte*. But both have already been thoroughly discussed, and this is, after all, a series of articles aimed as far as possible at presenting new possibilities with every writer's choice.

RICHARD STRAUSS: *Don Quixote*, Op. 35. Dr. Richard Strauss, Bavarian State Orchestra. P. Morasch, violin; P. Haass, viola; O. Uhl, 'cello. Siemens-Spezial (Grammophon) LM 67800/04.

Both the Feuermann and Piatigorsky sets tend quite naturally to stress the solo 'cello role in this work. I once found this quite proper, but the undoubtedly authentic reading of Richard Strauss would convince the most unyielding sceptic of the fundamentally orchestral character of the work. The solo 'cello is not slighted, as I seem to recall that it was in an older Beecham set, but neither is it stressed as in the other versions mentioned above. (The over-emphasis in the Feuermann set, of course, is largely due to recording balance.) This performance was recorded in 1941 through a new technique which Siemens (Germany's General Electric) had devised. It is quite satisfactory—smooth, rich, mellow and yet withal brilliant, and the solo instrument tones excellent—but not yet equal to the latest HMV and Victor at their best.

However, recording technique is the lesser

problem here. What matters is the presence of the composer's own authentic performance. This can at times be a mixed blessing—one has only to read the description of Tchaikovsky as a conductor to know that, or even to hear some Stravinsky recordings made with the composer as conductor. But Richard Strauss does not come under this category. Nazi or non-Nazi, he was for years one of Europe's great conductors, and his own performances have validity in the the same way as have those which Rachmaninoff made.

HANDEL: *Oboe Concerto No. 1* Leon Goossens, oboe; Eugene Goossens, London Philharmonic Orchestra. Victor 12605.

It is the fated misfortune of so many lovely single discs to be lost and passed by on the shelves of the music dealer. Especially is this true of little known works such as this.

This is rather more a concerto grosso than a solo concerto, but Leon Goossens holds none the less the stellar role, and a rewarding experience it is when one encounters such limpid tone and exquisite phrasing. There is nothing exciting about this music in the sense of roused emotions; indeed, this is music guaranteed "to soothe the savage breast." It is one of those singles which I consider a 'must'!

SCHIASSI: *Christmas Symphony*. Arthur Fiedler's Sinfonietta. Victor 13446.

As with the Concerto above, the title here is again a misnomer; the symphony is more a concerto grosso or suite. Melodically, the music recalls the oboe concerto above considerably, and its meditative style will have the same quieting and pleasing effect over innumerable hearings.

Fiedler's Sinfonietta is a far cry musically from his "Pops" Orchestra, and the musicianship evidenced in these Sinfonietta recordings is on another and more exalted level from those in most "Pops" discs. This is, I believe, the finest of the Sinfonietta recordings, which is to say that I cannot imagine the performance being bettered. The recording is smoothly contrived, without that harsh brilliance which I object to in some "Pops" records.

BARBER: *Adagio for Strings*. Arturo Toscanini, NBC Symphony Orchestra. Victor 11-8287.

This was the first American work which Toscanini consented to record, which in itself speaks for its musical worth. There is a pre-Bach quality to this music, an archaic line which releases the frequent repetition of its single theme from monotony. Barber would perhaps not consider this his greatest work—I personally prefer certain others—but the warmth and intensity of this performance, the magic of the slow crescendo, make this disc one which is not soon forgotten. And the work itself illustrates that frank honesty of emotion which is typical of Barber, and which has made him, unknown although he was in Germany a year ago, today one of the most beloved new foreign composers to have his music enter this benighted land.

RAVEL: *Daphnis et Chloé*—Suite No. 2. Serge Koussevitzky, Boston Symphony Orchestra. Victor Set SP-1.

Despite the inadequacy of its recording technique, so long as a copy of Koussevitzky's original magical reading was at hand, no one could ever persuade me to listen to either the Straram or Ormandy discs of this suite. Now, praise Orpheus, we are at last given an up-to-date recording of this conductor's incomparable interpretation.

How much does the orchestra itself count in such a score? More surely than can be told, as anyone who has studied this score knows—only with such a refined and responsive instrument as the Boston Symphony Orchestra can the balance be kept to that delicate point required by Ravel's color harmonies. But neither can one undervalue the role of the conductor in anything so intensely and intimately personal as this score. Dr. Koussevitzky is here the absolute master of the score, the complete partner of the composer, and to a degree where I cannot imagine any other conductor, now or in time to come, matching his complete projection of the work. Even with score in hand, I find the music eludes me, that I cannot retain it as *music*, as notes on a page, but find it dissolves into misty vapors and dreams, into fleeting emotions and mental

pictures which the mind seeks to grasp but which vanish at the touch.

DEBUSSY: *La Mer*. Serge Koussevitzky, Boston Symphony Orchestra. Victor Set 643.

Together with *Daphnis et Chloé* and the *Prélude à l'Après midi d'un Faune*, this is the outstanding work in the school of tone painting, and it is therefore not surprising that the master interpreter of one should be equally able in the others. The recording technique unfortunately falls rudely short of the lofty standard set by both interpretation and performance; the close of the first movement is blurred even at the first playing and will wear out almost immediately under anything but the lightest and most accurate pickups. Even so, the compelling power of the performance (the Rodzinski set doesn't even come into question!) overrule for me the technical objections.

SIBELIUS: *Violin Concerto in D Minor*. Jascha Heifetz, violin: Sir Thomas Beecham, London Philharmonic Orchestra. Victor Set 309.

I have a suspicion that in time to come later music-lovers may think less highly of Sibelius than do we, and I would in time not be surprised to see his symphonies assume a secondary place in the orchestral repertory.

Of the *Violin Concerto*, I would say something quite different. More a rhapsody for violin and orchestra in its effects than a normal, virtuoso violin concerto (and yet it is far more difficult than many of its flashier brethren), this is a mystic work of which it seems impossible to tire. The broad and stately motion of its first movement, the lofty emotion of its slow movement, and the significant exuberance of the finale (despite Tovey's cynical pun!) make it for me a satisfying experience such as I find in few works of this genre.

Recently, in reading W. R. Anderson's review of this work in a new British recording by Ginette Neveu, I was struck by the unwonted flow of superlatives lavished on this performance. I have not yet heard Miss Neveu's reading, but it would have to be superlative indeed to exceed the qualities evidenced in the Heifetz performance. Heifetz is not always to my taste; I would, for instance, never trade his conception of

the Brahms *Concerto* for that of Szigeti. However, I cannot escape the feeling in his performance of this concerto that there is the most perfect rapport between artist and music, and I cannot imagine what Miss Neveu could conceivably have done to this music (or dear old WRA!) to have brought forth such paens of praise. Perhaps a hearing of this new set could make me change my mind as to performer, but it would surely only strengthen my affection for the music. Either way, I should imagine any collector would find pleasure untold.

JOHANN STRAUSS II: *Kaiserwalzer*. Bruno Walter, Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. In Victor Set 805.

Let it be clear at the start—Johann Strauss is what you make him. In the hands of a Harry Horlick, a Kostelanetz or a Stokowski, he is a fine craftsman who wrote pretty melodies beloved by all. In the hands of a Bruno Walter, played by the Vienna Philharmonic—ah well! This is Vienna, this is Austria, but more—this is great music!

I do not consider the *Kaiserwalzer* Johann's greatest work; were performance on a par with this, I would have selected instead Szell's *An der schönen, blauen Donau*. But it is not' and the Vienna Philharmonic, in the hands of Bruno Walter, produces here what I consider to be the finest performance of a Strauss waltz on records.

MOZART: *Symphony No. 35 in D Major ("Haffner")*. Sir Thomas Beecham, London Philharmonic Orchestra. Columbia Set 399.

This is not one of the intense, passionate symphonies of Mozart (oh, yes, Mozart could be in his way as completely passionate, intense, emotional, heaven-storming as either Beethoven or Tchaikovsky—if you don't, think so, listen to *Don Giovanni* or the last three symphonies); this is rather Mozart in one of his milder, gayer moments. The finale contains a lovely pun, all wrapped up in the bassoon.

Beecham, who has given us ten great Mozart performances to every indifferent or poor one, is perhaps in better form here than he is in any other recorded work of Mozart save *Die Zauberflöte*. The performance can

be described only as immaculate, and (what with better recording) is one which I much prefer to the more feverish Toscanini conception.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 2 in D Major.* Erich Kleiber, Belgian National Orchestra. Telefunken E-2485/88.

I can give this performance no greater recommendation than to say that I prefer it to the fine sets offered by Beecham, Koussevitzky and Weingartner. Were I to analyze it, I might decide that it is perhaps because it contains a little of what I like best in each of these other recordings. It has a certain mellowness (recorded tone and performance) which endear the Beecham and Weingartner sets to me, and in the Finale, a dazzlingly brilliant virtuosity of which Koussevitzky would not be ashamed. There is some marvellously clean orchestral playing here, certainly superior to the LPO under either conductor, and yet without that hard patina which at times mars the Boston recording for me.

RUSSIAN SONGS: Songs by Cui, Tcherepnin, Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff, etc. Sung by Oda Slobodskaya, soprano. English Decca RVW-104/7.

As the symbols in the record numbers imply, this is a private recording which was commissioned by Rimington, Van Wyck, Ltd. of London, and as far as I know, may be obtained only on direct order from that store. These four records are one of my prized souvenirs of my English wartime sojourn; they have given me more lasting pleasure than any of the few records which I now have with me. Many Russian sopranos have a reputation for rather nasal voices and sharp, thin tones, but this is happily not sustained here. Mme. Slobodskaya has a warm and limpid voice which has been excellently recorded at a most satisfactory dynamic level. The result is that these records possess an intimate quality which make them ideal for home listening.

The songs themselves, although representing several different composers, whose professed ideologies are supposedly in opposition to one another, still bear a striking resemblance, a resemblance which must have

its base in the intense national character of all composers represented here, and which makes one realize that there is a school of Russian art-song, just as there is the German *Lied* and the French *chant*.



From Duet to Sextet

By Stephen Fassett

Part 10

During 1912 Victor released three duets, recorded a few years previously in the Milan studios of The Gramophone Company, which, before proceeding to the issues of 1913, I should like to discuss briefly. Two of these duets featured the celebrated baritone of Mattia Battistini, combined in each with a soprano of much less renown. In *D'acqua aspergime* from *Thaïs* (88353), Battistini's partner was a singer named Janni. Of her reputation, I know nothing—even her first name seems impossible to find—and any information about her would be welcomed for future publication in this magazine. Although a better performance is not impossible to imagine, the two singers give Massenet's melodious and vocally grateful music with easy charm. *Da quel di che l'ho veduta*, from *Ernani* (88374), the other Battistini duet, was sung with Emilia Corsi, soprano sister of the famous *buffo* artists, Gaetano (tenor) and Antonio (baritone) Pini-Corsi. Emilia, in addition to her Gramophone records with Battistini, made some solo discs for Fonotipia. Her voice and style were typical of the period of Italian singing to which she belonged, and not especially distinguished. She had a strong vibrato and relied too much on coarse chest tones; nevertheless, judging from the few records of hers that I have heard, she must have

had a considerable flair. She died on September 23, 1927. The third of these Milan recordings was *Parigi, o cara, noi lasceremo*, from *La Traviata*, sung by the Spanish soprano Josefina Huguet (Giuseppina, in Italy) and Fernando De Lucia on Victor disc 88361. As usual, De Lucia outshines Huguet, and the record is a good example of the tenor's individual style, with its long, spouted phrases and remarkable legato. Mechanically, it is a more forward reproduction than Victor was achieving in its American studios at the time (1907). Of the three recordings, the *Thaïs* duet turns up most often today; the other two are more difficult to obtain. The *Ernani* selection incidentally is not as rare on Opera Disc pressings as it is on Victor.

Domestic Issues of 1913

In March 1913, Farrar and Caruso again joined voices, this time in *On l'appelle Manon* (89059 or 8011) with the delightful results to be expected from singers who had sung Manon and Des Grieux together in so many fine performances of the Massenet opera. The recording had been made on December 12, 1912, and on the same day Caruso and Farrar waxed another duet that met with a strange fate. It was withheld from the public until about ten years ago, when it made and undeservedly belated appearance on IRCC 61. This was *O soave fanciulla*, from *La Bohème*, a far more impassioned and thrilling performance than the one Caruso had recorded in 1907 with Nellie Melba. Hearing it makes one wonder why Victor failed to give immediate release to a record which certainly would have been a gold mine. Some say that Farrar felt the balance was too much in favor of Caruso, but on a good modern phonograph her voice emerges effectively for the most part. The only fault I have to find with her rendition is the final high C, which sounds thin and strained; otherwise her singing is glorious and a good match to Caruso's outpouring of vibrant tones. Since the IRCC edition has been out of print for years, Victor might do well to consider this recording for their new *Heritage Series*.

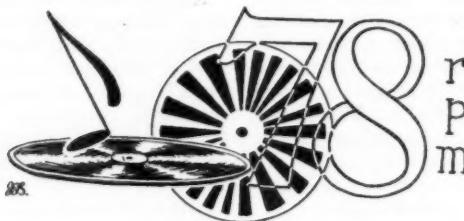
Another March duet was *Deh non parlare* from *Rigoletto* (89058) which paired Titta Ruffo's compelling baritone with the relatively unfamiliar soprano of Giuseppina Finzi-Magrini. Whether their singing is sufficiently outstanding to be worth the price so rare a record as this would command today is a question I do not feel qualified to answer.

Although circumstances of the moment prevent me from verifying the date, it must have been at about this time that Victor published its second red seal recording of the militant *Suoni la tromba* from *I Puritani* (89056). The baritone of the earlier version of 1907 (88500) was Mario Ancona; this time it was Pasquale Amato. In both, the admirable bass was Marcel Journet. Each is an excellent performance but the greater vocal brilliance of Amato and the fact that it is somewhat easier to obtain, make the 1913 recording preferable.

In April 1913 came duets from two Verdi operas with Caruso singing the tenor parts. One was *Ai nostri monti* from *Il Trovatore* (89060 or 8042), and Schumann-Heink was the contralto. Several years before, Caruso had recorded two different versions of the duet with Louise Homer (89018; see ARG for December 1945) and then his voice had flowed with a smoother continuity of tone than he was able to produce when recording with Schumann-Heink. All the same, it was the only duet these two extraordinary singers ever put on wax; also it was the only example we have of Heink's famous interpretation of Azucena. The disc was a great success with the public and is still very common. The other Verdi duet was from *Don Carlos*—*Dio che nell'alma* (89064 or 8036)—sung with Antonio Scotti, and is especially recommended as a change from the recording of *Solenne in quest'ora* (from the same opera) which the two artists made in 1906.

A lovely bit of duet singing of a quality that seems to have disappeared may be heard on Victor 87504—*Wanderers Nachlied* (Rubinstein), sung to perfection by Farrar and Schumann-Heink. This disc, which is

(Continued on page 292)



RECORD NOTES AND REVIEWS

It is the purpose of this department to review monthly all worthwhile recordings. If at any time we happen to omit a record in which the reader is particularly interested, we shall be glad to give our opinion of the recording on written request. Correspondents are requested to enclose self-addressed stamped envelopes.

We believe that record buyers would do well to order by title rather than by number such items as they may wish to purchase. Numbers are sometimes printed incorrectly in our sources.

All prices given are without tax.

Orchestra

BORODIN: *On the Steppes of Central Asia*; played by the Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Constant Lambert. Columbia disc 71956, price \$1.00.

▲ Mr. Lambert has a healthy objectiveness for music of this kind; he does not seek to inflate or over-dramatize its descriptive characteristics. One wishes Columbia would re-release here his version of the Borodin *Symphony No. 2*; it is a much better performance than the Mitropoulos one issued during the war and a better reproduced set. It is a long time since we have had a recording of this popular tone poem, which formerly was heard

in the concert hall more often than it is today. Hardly a great work, it however has its place in the scheme of things. Its orientalism is cleverly handled and colored to perfection; the program has to do with a caravan passing over the sandy Steppes of Central Asia—at first, “the unwonted sounds of a peaceful Russian song, then from the distance are heard the stamping of horses and camels and the peculiar sound of an oriental melody. The caravan draws near, and pursues its way through the desert sands under the protection of Russian arms. As it recedes into the distance the Russian song and the Asiatic melody are combined.”

Those who enjoy the imitative characteristics of program music will surely wish to acquire this well recorded disc. —P.H.R.

AUBER: *Fra Diavolo—Overture*; played by the London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. Decca disc I1489, price \$2.00.

AUBER: *Masaniello Overture*; played by the London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Victor Olof. Decca disc K1314, price, \$2.00.

MENDELSSOHN: *Hebrides Overture, Opus 26*; played by the National Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Dr. Heinz Unger. Decca disc K1120, price \$2.00.

MENDELSSOHN: *Ruy Blas Overture, Opus 95*; played by the National Symphony Orchestra, direction Dr. Heinz Unger. Decca disc K1326, price \$2.00.

BERLIOZ: *Beatrice and Benedict—Overture*; played by the National Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Malcom Sargent. Decca disc K1416, price \$2.00.

BERLIOZ: *Roman Carnival Overture*; played by the London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Victor de Sabata. Decca disc K1552, price \$2.00.

HUMPERDINCK: *Hansel and Gretel—Overture*; played by the London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Clarence Raybould. Decca disc K1315, price \$2.00.

HANDEL: *The Messiah—Overture*; played by the London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Malcolm Sargent. Decca disc K1449, price \$2.00.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Opritschnik—Overture*; and BELLINI: *Norma—Overture*; played by the National Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. Decca disc K1291, price \$2.00.

▲ These recordings were all heard at a dealer's shop on ordinary commercial equipment since Decca professes the shortage of records has not permitted shipment to us. Most of these overtures have been absent from catalogues for a long time. Some offer very good performances of the works, others are not much better than routine ones. While Fistoulari in his *Fra Diavolo* does not efface the memory of Klemperer and Lambert, he gives a good account of this music on his own. His *Norma* should be welcome to those who like this work. Its companion piece by Tchaikovsky is from a virtually forgotten opera and not of great consequence. I could hardly imagine anyone who had heard Beecham's performance of the *Hebrides* accepting Dr. Unger's version. Sargent's *Beatrice and Benedict* is most welcome and so too is deSabata's rhythmically buoyant account of the ubiquitous *Roman Carnival*, although the later is challenged by Beecham. On an ordinary machine Boult's *Hansel and Gretel* offers definite competition to Raybould's.

Few listeners will displace older records for any of these despite the fact that they have a wider reproductive range. On the average machine they will not sound any better than other records, and in some cases one may find clarity of detail lacking. On high-fidelity machines, the story might be different, but even here one does not find the clarity of detail that is noted in many modern domestic orchestral recordings.

—P.H.R.

DELIUS: *The Walk to the Paradise Gardens, Intermezzo* from *A Village Romeo and Juliet*; played by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, direction of Eugene Goossens. Victor disc 11-9493, price \$1.00.

▲ Neville Cardus, whose essay on Delius we hope to publish in the near future, says of this lovely work that through it "we can learn at once of an original mind and style, and of a melody and harmony that come from a unique sensibility." Here we encounter the type of poetic serenity of which I speak in my review of the *Violin Concerto*. Sometimes I think Delius could be too elusive for his own good; there is a sort of unworldliness to his mood. And again, when in the mood I find myself completely *en rapport* with him. There are other composers like him, Debussy, Ravel, de Falla occur to me immediately—though they are not exactly emotionally akin. They are not the everyday composers, one has to be in the "mood" for their music.

Before the war, Sir Thomas Beecham promised us a complete recording of Delius opera, *A Village Romeo and Juliet*. Perhaps someday, he will be able to realize his wish. The work is regarded by many as Delius' masterpiece. It has been broadly criticized as poor drama (how many operas have poor librettos), but musically the score is highly regarded by English critics and musicians. To criticize the drama and praise the music, Heseltine contends, "is simply to expose the fact that the meaning of the music itself has not been grasped; for the drama is literally but the overflowing of the music from the region of the audible into that of the visible. If opera can be described as a perfect correlation between music and action, the *A Village Romeo and Juliet* is one of the most flawless masterpieces that have ever been given to the world."

Our friend, W. R. Anderson, has told us about this interlude in the March 1946 issue of *The Gramaphone*. He said in part: "The music for the tragedy of the boy and girl lovers, son and daughter of quarreling Swiss farmers, is lovely, delicate matter, far from conventional opera: imperfect, perhaps, as regards Delius' completion of his lyrical-

drama dreaming, but touched with rare beauty. The 'Paradise Garden' is an inn by the river, with a garden that has run wild, overlooking a valley through which the water runs. . . The scene of the Walk is a jointure between the Fair which they (the lovers) leave, and the garden in which the 'Village Romeo and Juliet' spend their last hour on land." This is music of poetic pathos, which suggests the lovers strolling hand in hand, uneven in their steps, unconscious of a world beyond their own thoughts and immediate environment.

This modern recording of this music is a welcome addition to the domestic catalogue. Goossens plays this music with sympathetic understanding of its poetic pathos, and the recording is good. But reproducively I find the dynamics hardly as persuasive as I expected. The music is almost consistently *pianissimo* but there are climactic moments and these are not achieved with quite the necessary realism. But one suspects, this is difficult music to record.

—P.H.R.

FALLA: *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*; played by the National Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Enrique Jorda, Clifford Curzon at the piano. Decca set ED- or EDA-10, three discs, price \$7.00.

▲ The composer describes this work as "Sumphonic impressions for piano and orchestra in three parts". The three sections are "At General-life", "A Dance from a Distance", and "In the Gardens of Sierra de Cordoba." The music is impressionistic, a painting in sound, designed to "evoke places, sensations and sentiments." The composer says "the themes employed are based upon the rhythms, modes, cadences and ornamental figures which distinguish the popular music of Andalucia, though they are rarely used in their original forms. . . The music has no pretensions to being descriptive: it is merely expressive." The last time we had a recording of this set was in January 1941, when Victor issued a French performance conducted by Eugene Bigot, with Lucette Descaves at the keyboard. This latter set stands up on an ordinary machine very well against the new one; there is often a better clarity of piano and instrumental line. But on a high fidelity set this new version is thrilling with its vivid tonal coloring despite the occasional lack of

clarity and the fact that the pianist is often submerged too much in the orchestral ensemble. At few points can one distinguish the left hand line of the pianist. Jorda, a Spaniard by birth, is more vividly intense in his conception of the score than was Bigot, one might say more *en rapport*; but I do not think Curzon eclipses Mlle. Descaves at the keyboard. The work is not a great one, but it offers a highly gratifying aural experience in subtle rhythmic interplay and tonal color—few would deny its charm, but few would be inclined to say that it was a work one would play repeatedly or often.

—P.H.R.

GOULD: *Cowboy Rhapsody*; *American Salute*; *Go Down Moses*; *Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child*; *New China March*; *Red Cavalry March*; played by the Robin Hood Dell Orchestra of Philadelphia, conducted by Morton Gould. Columbia set M- or MM- 668, four discs, price \$5.00.

▲ The annotator tells us that all of the music in this album was written to fill some specific need, but the specific need of the two Spirituals, for strings harp and celesta, are not given. The three marches were written for programs the composer conducted for a series of government-sponsored radio broadcasts prior to our entry into the war. Perhaps the best of these is the brash and showy *American Salute*, making use of the Civil War Song, *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*. All of the music here is based upon familiar rather than original tunes, which Gould treats in a showy manner. Gould is no economist in orchestral effects, he knows the tricks. His orchestrations are cleverly calculated to impress, but often he defeats his best interests by too many effects. His *Cowboy Rhapsody* (three sides) is too long, there is too much padding. Maybe this is sure-fire material with a certain type of audience—those who doze on familiar tunes like *Old Paint* and *Home on the Range* considerably dressed up. The Spiritual arrangements are also a bit on the pretentious side and the string tone tends to become overly luscious, especially in *Go Down Moses*.

That Mr. Gould makes the most of his orchestral resources here and Columbia has given him vital recording which should please his admirers. There is some shrillness in the strings which may have to do with the place

of recording.

—P.H.R.

MENDELSSOHN: *Symphony No. 5 in D minor (Reformation)* (7 sides); and MOZART: *La Clemenza di Tito—Overture* (1 side); played by the London Philharmonic Orchestra, direction of Sir Thomas Beecham. Victor Set 1104, price \$4.85.

Sir Thomas' last previous venture with a Mendelssohn symphony, the *Italian*, was somewhat of a recording fiasco. It is gratifying to find that his latest venture with the composer has been skillfully and realistically recorded. The *Reformation* is by no means a familiar symphony, despite the fact that Toscanini has programmed it a number of times in recent years. I believe it was the eminent Maestro who revived interest in this work in the concert hall in his programs of the Philharmonic Symphony back in 1931. The late Lawrence Gilman wrote at length upon the symphony and expressed his approval of Toscanini's revival. Said Mr. Gilman, in his program notes: "The most noteworthy feature of the work is its employment of music possessing religious associations. In the first movement, Mendelssohn utilizes the Amen formula of the Saxon Lutheran Church—the so-called *Dresden Amen*, with the rising sixths, of which Wagner afterward made such impressive use in the Grail motive of *Parsifal*. It has been said that Mendelssohn originally intended this symphony for the Centenary of the Augsburg Confessional, June 25, 1830; and commentators have discovered in the first movement a representation of 'the Reformers' joy in combat, their firmness in belief and trust in God'. Some difficulty was encountered in deciding exactly what the second movement, the *Allegro vivace* (which corresponds to a Scherzo), had to do with the Reformation; but the association is fully justified in the *Andante con moto*, in which Mendelssohn makes use of the Lutheran Chorale, *Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott*."

The symphony though bearing a later opus number ante-dates the *Scotch* and the *Italian Symphonies*. It was while on a tour of Great Britain that the young composer conceived this work, along with his *Scotch Symphony* and *Hebrides Overture*. I noted in January 1940, when Howard Barlow's recording of this work was released, that the composer was less impressive in his religious moods

than he is in his picturesque ones. Although there is dignity to his treatment of the *Amen* theme, his utterance lacks the poetic fervor of Wagner's use of the same material. Few would deny that the symphony has its impressive moments, pages of majestic sweep, but the composer here—despite his conscientious and skillful craftsmanship—does not equal throughout the spontaneity of mood that we find in his *Italian* and *Scotch Symphonies*. Beecham with his finely cultured mind gives us a performance appreciable for its majestic power and sweep and its poetic sensibility. His is a more searching and imaginative reading than Barlow's.

Sir Thomas' encore should open the show, and yet this most melodious of Mozartean overtures does not seem out of place as a tailpiece—for who among us could fail to be left in a completely happy frame of mind after its spirited coda? *La Clemenza di Tito*

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was the last operatic work of Mozart and its overture is a delightful piece of melodic writing, to which—needless to say—Sir Thomas does full justice.

—P.H.R.

SINIGAGLIA: *Danza Piemontese in A, Op. 31, No. 1*; played by the Boston "Pops" Orchestra, direction of Arthur Fiedler. Victor disc 11-9446, price \$1.00.

▲ A pleasant, pastoral type of composition, based on folk airs, which Mr. Fiedler plays with a deft lyrical touch. It is the first of two dances that the Italian composer Leone Sinigaglia wrote and is, as far as we know, the only work of the composer's on records. Sinigaglia has been a student and conscientious collector of the Piedmont section of his native Italy and has published among other things four books of Piedmontese folk tunes. His chamber music has received some praise. Casella has said that he "was one of the pioneers in the revival of interest in instrumental music in Italy." This is the sort of music that will make a lot of people hum or whistle, its tunes are both pleasing and catchy. Mr. Fiedler might also revive interest in its companion dance. Recording is excellent.

—P.G.

Concerto

DELIUS: *Violin Concerto*; played by Albert Sammons and the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, direction of Malcolm Sargent. Columbia set M- or MM-672, three discs, price \$4.00.

▲ This music is not for everyone. It is quiet, dreamy and infinitely serene. The score was written at Delius' retreat outside of Paris—Grez-sur-Loing—in 1916. There, he had hidden himself from the world, and he must have felt safe and completely apart from the war-torn universe to have devised a score like this. There will be those who will criticize this work as a meandering, rhapsodic opus which fails to achieve a dramatic continuity. Oh, that more of us had the requisite patience to appreciate serenity in music and the true feeling for "symmetry or transition of theme." There

is form here, but it is not academic. Heseltine, in his book on the composer (long out of print), has said: "From beginning to end the work is one long impassioned monologue for the solo violin against an orchestral background." I know of no work quite like it unless it is *The Lark Ascending* by Vaughn Williams. But the warm sensibility of Delius' music sets it apart from the latter score. "Delius," says Neville Cardus, "needed an emotion of poetry to move him to composition, he turned naturally to the orchestra and blended voices." Heseltine tells us Delius was reading the poetry of Fiona Macleod when he wrote this work, and this is the atmosphere and emotion of which the concerto is assuredly associated.

When this recording was issued in England in September 1944, W. R. Anderson writing in *The Gramophone* said in part: "The work is in one movement, with clear divisions into four sections, of which the second is a slower one, and the third a recapitulation of No. 1 with differences. The finale is a dance, lightly linked to No. 1; a coda finishes the sweet work, which shows French influence in spots (e.g. end of side 1). There is no drama formal or informal; just Delius at his romantic best, now impulsive in his winning fashion, now dreaming imitatively. I find it delicious on this August day of hard-won perfect summer joy, free even from the siren. . . . Forgetting the classical concerto and the 19th-century French types, we can sink back into the cozy rhapsodizing of the violin, which, without seeking to dominate, quietly takes the whole provenance of the work as its own. After many years one comes to think that Delius, in his apparently unsymphonic way, unskilled in the sonata of 'development', could never go far wrong so long as he had an orchestra at his imagination's call; and when he also has the fiddle, his cup is full."

Delius wrote this concerto for Albert Sammons; it is dedicated to the violinist. As Anderson says (and he being English should know), the performance here is a thoroughly sympathetic one. Recently Beecham with the French violinist, Jean Pouquet, made another recording of this work for H.M.V. Edward Sackville West, writing in the March 22nd issue of *The New Statesman and Nation* finds the present performance more satisfactory, he says; "The solo part in this con-

certo is peculiarly difficult to sustain, and Mr. Pougnet's performance does not approach the rapt, lark-like ecstasy which is Mr. Albert Sammon's bright particular gift."

I am in complete agreement with my two valued English friends—Messrs. Anderson and West, regarding the merits of the present performance. The recording is excellent, but requires a reduction of bass to do its full justice on most American equipment.

—P.H.R.

Chamber Music

BRAHMS: *Sonata in F minor, Op. 120, No. 1*; played by William Primrose (viola) and William Kapell (piano). Victor set M- or DM-1106, three discs, price \$3.85.

▲The question inevitably arises as to which instrument is best suited to the last two chamber works of Brahms—the clarinet or the viola. There are many who feel that the viola is the more expressive medium, but I must confess I am equally fond of the works played by either instrument. Certainly in the recordings of the *E flat Sonata*, there is a greater expressive variety and beauty of tone in Primrose's viola than in Thurston's clarinet (H.M.V. set). And the same thing holds true of Primrose's performance here in comparison to Weber's clarinet playing (in Musicraft set 27). In his performance of the *E flat Sonata* (Victor set 422) Primrose had the sensitive and comprehending musicality of Gerald Moore, here he has the youthful and less experienced Mr. Kapell. The difference is marked, in the one set I feel the violinist had the ideal partner, in the present it does not seem to me that this holds true, despite some admirable and hitherto unrevealed facets of Mr. Kapell's artistry. The two sonatas of *Opus 120* are too mature in their creative content for any artist to tackle who has not extensively played the earlier ones of the composer; they are reflective works in which Brahms seems to harken back to previous thoughts and emotions of his musical life. They are musical ruminations. I am not among those who regard these two sonatas as lesser Brahms, even though I am willing to admit they are eclipsed

by others in his long list of chamber works.

The melancholic aspects of this work are heard to advantage in Primrose's beautiful viola tone, yet I think an older set of the work by Lionel Tertis with Harriet Cohen possessed a more plangent expressiveness in the viola quality of Mr. Tertis. Primrose's viola often sounds tonally too much like a violin, but few would gainsay his beauty of tone. The opening melody of the work, with its widespread intervals, is far more appealing from Primrose's viola than from Mr. Weber's clarinet. It sets the stage better for an immediate appreciation of the music. Primrose's wide host of admirers will unquestionably be gratified to have his rendition of the companion to the *E flat Sonata*.

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In August 1943, Columbia gave us a recording of this work by Samuel Lifschey, first violist of the Philadelphia Symphony, and Egon Petri (set 487). I noted at the time that Lifschey's tone exploited the more rugged characteristics of the viola; certainly my contention that Mr. Primrose is a more suave player is substantiated here. But Mr. Lifschey had a more understanding partner, one who brought a more persuasive delicacy in nuance to the lyrical portions of the work. However, in the final analysis, this performance is highly recommendable both from its interpretative side and its finely balanced reproduction.

—P.H.R.

BEETHOVEN: *Grand Fugue, Opus 133*; played by the Kroll Quartet. Musicraft set 73, two discs, price \$2.75.

▲ Beethoven's wisdom in withdrawing this highly complex fugal movement from his *B flat Quartet, Opus 130* and substituting another less austere was a wise move on his part. The *Grand Fugue* is well named; it is a majestic and a highly pretentious affair. I have often been tempted to mop my brow along with the players when its performance has been completed. Although Beethoven wrote it for the string quartet, I think it fares best with a small string orchestra. On records, none have succeeded in conveying the power of its emotion nor the impact of its drama like Busch and his Chamber Players have done in Columbia set X-221. The Kroll Quartet are technically a very capable ensemble, but the going gets rough with them—as it does with so many quartets—and when the performance is through one applauds more for the players' perseverance than for their interpretative skill. Tonally, I think this ensemble rather thin for music of this order. If the interested reader will look back to our June 1942 issue, he will find a review of the Busch performance by Irving Kolodin; I am in agreement with him that Busch's interpretation is really a recreation of the music. The recording is satisfactory.

—P.H.R.

MOZART: *Quartet No. 2 in E flat major* (for piano and strings), K. 493; played by George Szell (piano) with members of the Budapest String Quartet. Columbia set M- or MM-669, three discs, price \$4.00.

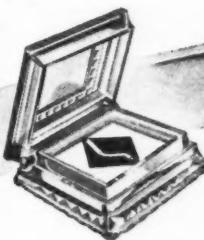
▲ There will be some of my readers who will remember George Szell's performance in a chamber work with the New Friends of Music several years ago. Those who heard him were highly flattering to his status as an ensemble player. And well they may have been, as this performance proves. Szell does not strive for brilliancy of performance but for an intimacy of style that permits the best fusion of the ensemble. If on occasion he stands forth it is as it should be, for the work—despite its intergration of purposes—features the keyboard instrument somewhat in the manner of a concerto. The finale, for example, has been called a miniature piano concerto, and it is the pianist who is chosen to open that exquisitely contemplative etude—the Larghetto.

This composition belongs to the same year as *Nozze di Figaro* and the *Prague Symphony*; it was completed a month after the opera. The character of the music is deceptive—for though it is lyrically intimate and warmly sentient, there is an underlying dramatic purpose—note the dramatic contrast of the opening movement and the imaginative handling of the material of the finale. The slow movement is a rare example of Mozart's feeling for serenity. Too many people listen to Mozart for the sheer joy of his melodic writing, they do not—especially in his later works—apprehend the perfect blend of emotion and intellect. The rationality of his inspiration never stemmed from his emotions, or persuasive as the latter may be, but from his amazing intuitive processes—his musical intelligence. The more one listens to this quartet, the more one becomes aware of the irresistibility of its inspiration, which is the more remarkable in that the composer did not endeavor to inflate his slender material in the manner of so many modern writers. I shall have reason to discuss this work shortly in a projected article on Mozart's chamber music, long overdue.

In 1938, we had a performance of this quartet by Hortense Monath and the Pasquier Trio (Victor 438). The pianist tended to dominate the ensemble more than Szell does here, but the string balance and the homogenous playing of the Pasquier brothers was far more persuasive than what we encounter from the members of the Budapest ensemble. The latter give an admirable performance in many ways but the reproduction

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here does not always achieve—in my estimation—the perfected blend of string playing I find in the older set. Despite this criticism, this album is recommendable for the musical qualities of the performance are of a high order and the playing of Mr. Szell is unusually persuasive.

—P.H.R.

SCHUBERT: *Quartet in E flat major, Op. 125, No. 1*; played by the Guilet String Quartet. Concert Hall Society (unlimited release) set AE, three discs, price \$7.00.

▲ It is a long time since we have had a domestic release of this quartet, almost two decades. It is an early work, dating from the composer's sixteenth year (the opus numbers on Schubert's scores are confusing, and generally best ignored). The *E major Quartet, Op. 125, No. 2*, for example, came three or fours years later. If the present work does not abound in the inspired songful tunes of the best Schubert quartets, those written from 1824 onward, it still has its appeal. The opening movement seems rather academic but we are told it reveals the young composer for the first time conquering the sonata form. One suspects Schubert selected his thematic material for its malleability. The spirit of Haydn and Beethoven are present here which accounts for the lack of spiritual freedom that is found in his later opening movements. The best and most typically Schubertean movement is the finale, and it is in spirit and melody quite irresistible. The scherzo and slow movements lie on a lesser plane, but interest in the work picks up with the brusque and gusty scherzo.

The Guilet Quartet, four musicians of French birth, is a finely coordinated group; their ensemble work has unquestionably been molded and polished in a manner suggesting stylistic compatibility, it is especially appealing for its clear articulation and plasticity of phrasing. Tonally, this organization is lacking in the warm sensibility of the Budapests, but on the same premise theirs is often a more sanguineous blend of string tone. Their treatment of the opening movement and the *Adagio* is more objective than I like; yet the playing is accomplished with musicianly aplomb. It is in the scherzo and the especially appealing finale where the group are

most appreciable. Indeed, so impressive was their performance of the finale I could not resist replaying it immediately.

The recording is most satisfactorily realized except for a sudden raise in volume level between the first and second sides. The plastic discs are on the most part smooth, but one or two sides had crackling sounds.

—P.H.R.

Keyboard

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata in C sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2 (Moonlight)*; played by Vladimir Horowitz (piano). Victor set M- or DM-1115, two discs, price \$2.85.

▲ Another "Moonlight"! I thought Mr. Serkin had lulled it to sleep, and Mr. Levant had only rudely awakened it for a brief spell. In the same vein, I might add that Mr. Horowitz arouses it from the slumber we had consigned it some time back. We have had some highly individual interpretations of several other Beethoven sonatas recently, and I presume such performances rise or fall with different listeners. The modern pianists seem to pursue divergent and individual paths—tradition, according to one noted piano pedagogue, of my acquaintance, no longer is observed. But tradition is almost as debatable as the whims and caprices of various artists.

Horowitz endows the first movement with a poetic placidity which is only redeemed by the beauty of his tone and the clarity and smoothness of his playing. I like the movement played a shade faster, but few will gainsay that his performance is not exceptional pianistic artistry. Some contrast the rhythm of the *Allegretto* more than Horowitz, with him the movement lacks decision, yet the charm and grace of the music are substantiated. The last movement is close to impetuosity in its headlong rush. But perhaps some will feel that the urgency of its drama is met by the pianist. His playing here is certainly a model of clarity.

Victor has captured the beauty of Horowitz tone in a recording that completely satisfies.

—P.H.R.

CHOPIN: *Waltz in C sharp minor, Op. 64, No. 2*; and MENDELSSOHN: *Songs Without Words—Elegy, Op. 85, No. 4* and *Spring Song, Op. 62, No. 6*; played by Vladimir Horowitz (piano). Victor disc 11-9519 price, \$1.00.

▲ Horowitz creates a rare poetic mood in his performance of the Chopin waltz, the beauty of his tone and his immaculate finger work are a joy to the ear. The "veiled melancholy" of the first theme is conveyed with true feeling. There is a sort of poetic elegy to this waltz, as Huneker once pointed out, and Horowitz does not disturb the charm of its lyrical beauty. Indeed, he substantiates it with fine artistry.

His treatment of the two Mendelssohn pieces is admirable for their poetic feeling, but is it my imagination or over familiarity with other types of performances which makes me feel his *Spring Song* is a bit subdued and reticent? The recording here is excellently handled, especially in its realistic reproduction of the pianist's *pianissimo* playing. —P.H.R.

CHOPIN: *Polonaise in A flat, Opus 53*; played by the First Piano Quartet. Victor disc 46-0005, price 75c.

▲ There are those who think that the sequence in the picture, based on Chopin's life, where Liszt supposedly joined Chopin to make a piano duet out of this composition was most effective. In a movie theatre one is not apt to be critical of musical performance, and as I recall the incident in the picture I would be inclined to agree that its psychological implications made it effective in a theatrical way. Here, we have four pianos rendering the famous and popular *Polonaise*. The group is a radio combine which seems to have clicked with the public. There is something rather electrifying about this performance (no pun intended) even though a good deal of it is on the heavy-handed side and rather ponderous. The big chords at the close of the first record face and on side two are most effectively conveyed. The group has admirable precision which plays up well the heroic qualities of the music but also defeats the best effects in the more lyrical passages. Of the recordings of this work which we have heard our choice would go to Rubin-

stein's warm-hued version first and Horowitz's brilliant exposition second. The Iturbi performance, which is singularly slipshod in our estimation, has sold most of all we are told, which only goes to show how the majority of people are swayed by Hollywood publicity. Just how this disc should fit into the scheme above it would be hard to say; as a novelty it has its attractions. The recording is effectively realistic. —P.H.R.

JOSEF LHEVINNE Memorial Album No.

1: *Nocturne in B major, Op. 9, No. 3* (Chopin); *Liebestraum* (Liszt); *Etudes in E flat and in G flat, Op. 10, No. 11* and *Op. 25, No. 9*; *La Campanella* (Paganini-Liszt-Busoni); played by Josef Lhevinne (piano). Disc set 774, two discs, price \$3.25.

▲ Lhevinne's accomplishments as a pianist were many; he had an admirable grasp on the purely musical qualities of the works he performed. This is borne out in these recordings, which while good are nonetheless products of a previous era in recording. I would say they were made prior to the war.

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There was a fine fullness and roundness to his tone, and often a gratifying poetic touch that seldom became sentimental. Perhaps first and foremost Lhevinne was the master technician, and the accuracy and fleetness, the brilliancy of his playing were qualities that stood him in good stead. He ranked in his day as one of the foremost Chopin players of his time. As a teacher, he was highly regarded.

It is fitting that these souvenirs of Lhevinne's artistry should have been released, and we shall look forward to subsequent albums. The *Nocturne* is an early opus of Chopin with a passionate and dramatic inner section which Lhevinne does not play up as much as Rubinstein. There is much to be said for the pianist's avoidance of sentimental stress. Both the etudes are neatly played. The so-called "Butterfly" is tossed off with a fleet-fingered delicacy and accuracy that makes it sound like child's play. The lack of highs in the recording leaves something to be desired in the upper range of the piano; it fails to substantiate the brilliancy of the pianist's execution. The *Liebestraum* need not detain us, it is well played, but Lhevinne's performance of the *Campanella* for its virtuoso musical qualities stands with the best.

—P.H.R.

LISZT (arr. Whittemore and Lowe): *Liebestraum*; and PAGANINI-LISZT (arr. Whittemore and Lowe): *Variations on Paganini Caprice No. 24*; played by Arthur Whittemore and Jack Lowe (duo-pianists). Victor disc 28-0410, price 75c.

▲There are some of us to whom Liszt's *Liebestraum* is anathema and others who hang on every bar with complete satisfaction. I cannot honestly say this ubiquitous composition gains in the present arrangement, it seems needlessly involved and weighty in the middle. The Paganini via Liszt work stands up better and the two pianists do some nice playing in its lyrical passages. I suspect the *Liebestraum* goes over big with audiences and the pianists' admirers will welcome this disc for it. Others who do not like this composition would do well to hear the reverse face, it is deftly played and reveals the artists as one of the most skillful two-

piano teams now before the public. The recording is good.

—P.G.

RAVEL: *Ondine, No. 1 from Gaspard de la nuit*; played by Alexander Brailowsky (piano), Victor disc 11-9260, price \$1.00.

▲Back in September 1937, Columbia brought out a performance by Gieseking (set X-141) of the three pieces which Ravel called *Gaspard de la Nuit*, since they were based upon prose-poems by Aloysius Bertrand from a book of the same title. Of the three pieces, *Ondine* seems to be the most popular. It is an example of Ravel's fastidious workmanship, an elaborate piece of water music slightly reminiscent of his earlier *Jeux d'eau*. The Gieseking performance was achieved on one record face but I do not believe it was cut. Brailowsky plays it slightly slower and, in my estimation despite his fine finger work and skillful pedalling, he does not quite make the most of this highly atmospheric composition. But many may prefer his performance for its greater clarity of line and detail which Victor's well contrived recording brings out. The disc I heard was unusually smooth for a piano record and left one undisturbed in the enjoyment of the delicate sheen and color of the music. There is something elusive about this work, it seems to be spun from fantasy and never quite real. For that reason I think its appeal is ephemeral.

The following extracts from the poem on which the music is based may be of interest to the record buyer. "Listen! It is Ondine who touches lightly with these water drops the panes of the windows, lighted by the rays of the moon. Listen! My father strikes the water with a branch of green reed, and my sisters caress with their foamy arms the islands of cool grass, water lilies and iris... Her murmured song entreats me to take her brothal ring upon my finger, to be the lover of Ondine, to visit with her in the palace, to be the king of the Lakes. When I replied that I loved a mortal, pouting and vexed, she wept bitter tears, uttered a scream, fainted and trickled in white drops along my bluish window pane."

This is, of course, a pianistic representation of the familiar Lorelei theme that so many composers have perpetuated in song.

—P.H.R.

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Instrumental

HARMONICA CLASSICS; played by John Sebastian (harmonica player). Victor set P 166, four 10-inch discs, price \$3.75.

▲As novelties go, this set will have a wide appeal, unless—of course—the memories of our childhood days of struggling with a harmonica are completely lost. As to its purely musical values, that remains a moot question, but make no mistake about Sebastian's ability to play the lowly harmonica. He is one of the top virtuosos in his field. For an unusual exploitation in exotic rhythms, we have the *Inca Dance* by Mr. Sebastian which is accompanied by Norris Shawker at the drums. And for sustained melodic work, we have the harmonica arrangement of Bach's celebrated *Air* and Debussy's piano prelude *The Maiden with the Flaxen Hair*. This sort of thing is not appealing to me, but I must admit the pieces serve to reveal admirable facets of the player's ability. The *Stompe a la Turca* (with Apologies to Mozart) fails to sustain interest, it has none of the persuasive qualities of Scott's *Minuet in Jazz*. And de Falla's *Ritual Fire Dance*, despite the virtuoso work of the soloist, lacks the excitement it has in the original scoring (hear the Reiner performance in Columbia set 663). Guion's short *Harmonica Player*, with its folk-song implications, is quite delightful. There are also *Moroccan Serenade* by Sebastian and an arrangement of Lecuona's *Malaguena*. Mr. Sebastian has the alternate assistance of Russ Case and his Orchestra and of Alver Malver at the piano. The recording is excellently handled. This is the sort of thing that will go over big in parties, and I daresay a lot of folks will enjoy occasional listening on their own. —P.H.R.

SARASATE: *Malaguena, Op. 21, no. 1; Habanera, Op. 21, no. 2*; played by Ricardo Odnoposoff (violin) with piano accompaniments by Gregory Ashman. Victor disc 11-9495, price \$1.00.

▲These pieces of Sarasate are essentially *Etudes* in the Chopin sense, for they are first and foremost display numbers or studies in technical problems, but at the same time

more than incidentally melodious colorful attractive. The suave tune of the *Malaguena* calls for a rich and glowing tone, and the ability of the performer to produce this is quite as important as the melody itself. Of course if the passage work and the harmonics of the middle section are not tossed off with a flourish the piece is without interest. No one will question Odnoposoff's success in making this and its companion piece sound for all they are worth, for his is easily one of the most spectacular violinistic talents of the present day. The only reservation I have in recommending this disc to all who enjoy such bits of Spanish color concerns the recording, which is somewhat over-brilliant and lacking in depth. —P.L.M.

SCHUBERT: *Ave Maria* (Arr. Wilhelmj); DEBUSSY: *La Plus que Lent—Valse* (Arr. Roques); CHOPIN: *Nocturne in E minor, Op. 72* (Arr. Auer); SARASATE: *Romanza Andaluza*; played by Jascha Heifetz, (violin) with piano accompaniments by Emanuel Bay. Victor discs 11-9571 and 11-9573, price \$1.00 each.

▲These two new records carry Mr. Heifetz back to the days of acoustic recording, when he was making regular contributions of just such pieces to the Victor catalogue. All the admired features of his playing are here in ample measure, the beautiful tone, the dazzling technique, the marvelously clean double stops and the purity of intonation. But there is little of purely musical interest. Personally I have always resented what Wilhelmj did to Schubert's exalted and virginal melody, since one thing it doesn't need is elaboration. But I suppose that anyone who wants the *Ave Maria* in the violin transcription will find complete satisfaction here, for all the lingering over details and the stretching which the tune undergoes. The recording throughout is satisfactory.

—P.L.M.

SCHUMANN (arr. Huelweck): *Träumerie, Op. 15, No. 7*; and GREIG (arr. Hartmann): *Album Leaf, Op. 28, No. 3*; played by Mischa Elman (violin) with Leopold Mittman at the piano. Victor 10-inch disc 10-2171, price 75c.

▲While it can be said that Mr. Elman plays these pieces nicely, it should be noted that

he tends to favor tonal sweetness. There is always room for disagreement on transcriptions of this kind; I think interested buyers would do well to look up the recordings in the original piano versions and make their own comparisons. Some may understand why the present reviewer prefers the originals. Good recording. —P.G.

Voice

BOWLES: *Night Without Sleep; Song for My Sister; When Rain or Love Began; Sailor's Song; You Can't Trust in Love; You're Right, the Day Ain't Mine; Think of All the Hair-Dressing; They Can't Stop Death;* Sung by Romolo de Spirito (tenor) with piano accompaniments by Carrington Welch. Disc set 730, three 10-inch discs, price \$3.75.

▲ Paul Bowles is one of the younger group

of American composers who has made an especially study of the problems of song writing. Although he has written music of successful Broadway shows as well as for documentary films, has tried his hand at various standard musical forms—orchestral works, chamber music, a two-piano concerto, sonatas—and has even collaborated with Salvador Dali on the ballet *Colloque Sentimentale*, it is perhaps the song form which he finds most congenial, and he has been more successful with it than many of his colleagues. His association with Virgil Thomson on the music staff of the New York Herald-Tribune may have helped him in this, for Thomson too has long been interested in voices and the particular subtleties of setting words to music. Disc performs a real service to American music in issuing this recorded program of Bowles songs, for there is no better way on the one hand to get for the composer the hearing which is essential to his growth, and on the other for the public to decide whether or not he really has something to say to them.



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There is bound to be a large public to whom these songs will not appeal, for the composer has adapted his formal structure to the shifting images of the lyrics. The poet in all but one of the songs is Charles Henri Ford, editor of the *avant-garde* magazine *View*, and it is fairly safe to say that the listener's appreciation of Bowles' music will be conditioned by his opinion of the texts. For whether or not the composer has added much to the significance of the poetry, he has certainly set it clearly and intelligibly. He has not created any whistleable tunes. Perhaps the best approach to the set is through the three arias, *You Can't Trust in Love*, *Think of All the Hair-Dressing* and *You're Right, the Day Ain't Mine* from the Ford-Bowles opera *Denmark Vesey*, which was produced by the Federal Theatre Project in 1937. Here the appeal is more direct than in some of the other songs. The final number, with words by Joe Massey, a primitive artist whose poetic gifts are said to have been discovered by *View*, is intensely serious and lacking in the fantasy which runs through the Ford verses.

Romolo de Spirito has been hailed by Virgil Thomson as "a very great vocal musician." Certainly his work here gives every evidence of an unusual musical and literary intelligence; everything is in good taste and the quality of the voice is at all times pleasant. If, however, he belongs among the few singers with the gift of song-projection the recording has not transmitted this quality. And if the songs somehow fail to sustain the interest throughout the set this must be at least in part because the singer has not compelled us to listen to them. How much of this criticism should be directed at the singer and how much at the recording engineers I will leave it to other listeners to determine. But I urge all of my readers who are interested in the development of the American art song to hear these discs and to encourage the recording companies to use this most satisfactory means of letting us know what our composers are doing.

—P.L.M.

FOLK SONGS AND BALLADS, VOL. II: *Black is the Color of My True Love's Hair; I'm Sad and I'm Lonely; The Widow Malone; Danny Boy; Greensleeves; Mother, I Would Marry; I Know My Love; The Three Gulls; Lord Randall;* sung by Susan

Reed with Irish harp or zither accompaniments. Victor set M-1107, three 10-inch discs, price \$3.00.

▲Susan Reed's first album of *Folk Songs and Ballads* (Victor M-1086) released in February, afforded me some of the pleasantest listening I have had this year. It is with reluctance, therefore, that I must admit I am less impressed by this follow-up. The trouble is partly in the program she has selected, for there is nothing in it to touch her singing of *Venezuela*, *Barbara Allen* or *A Mighty Ship*, and there are several songs included which seem indefinitely foreign to her style. I suppose it is understandable enough that she should want to sing that wonderful melody known as *The Londonderry Air*, and if she must have words (there being no original text extant) she probably was wise enough to choose the verses called *Danny Boy*. "After much thought and searching among other lyrics," we are told, "including those of Thomas Moore, Susan finally chose to sing the most familiar words of all for modern audiences, those of Frederick L. Weatherly." But since this text is so familiar she should have stuck to it and not drifted off into variations which are certainly no improvement. There must be many like myself who can not get over being annoyed by what she has done with this song.

Not to go into too great detail about the other selections, I think that perhaps what bothers me is the applying of the same patently American style of presentation to a variety of songs from different parts of the world. To be sure she did this in the earlier album too, but it so happened that the songs she selected for it could take the transplanting better than these. An international folk singer must assimilate many styles; Miss Reed rather adapts the songs to her own way of doing them. As before the recording is very clear and lifelike, and again her self-accompaniments on the Irish harp and zither are completely effective.

—P.L.M.

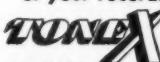
ITALIAN OPERATIC ARIAS: *Aida: Ritorna vincitor* (Verdi); *Otello: Ave Maria* (Verdi); *Don Giovanni: Or sai chi l'onore* (Mozart); *Tosca: Vissi d'arte* (Puccini); *Gioconda: Suicidio!* (Ponchielli); *Cavalleria Rusticana: Voi lo sapete* (Mascagni); sung by Helen Traubel (soprano) with

orchestra; direction of Charles O'Connell. Columbia M/MM-675, three discs, price \$4.00.

▲ Emma Eames once said: "I love the role of Tosca, as it deals with the elemental emotions and is direct and simple—a rest after Wagnerian brain-pickings." It is not unlikely that Miss Traubel made these recordings in a somewhat similar spirit. We can easily understand why this soprano never gets a chance to sing Tosca, Aida or Santuzza at the Metropolitan—it is the price she pays for being so nearly unique in our time. What she would do with Italinate music is hinted at in this new set. I say hinted at because, good as so much of her singing of these arias is, the lady has obviously not yet thoroughly assimilated the style of Verdi, Puccini, Ponchielli and Mascagni. Hers is, of course, not the type of voice one usually hears in these works, nor has her training in Wagner been ideal for the mastery of them. It is a matter for admiration that a present-day Isolde can sing this music at all, and she may take satisfaction in the realization that not one of her Italian wing colleagues is likely to return the compliment by invading her usual territory. In the days

of Lilli Lehmann, Olive Fremstad, Lillian Nordica, Emmy Destinn and Johanna Gadski a singer approached the Wagnerian repertoire through a strict training in the Italian or Mozartean roles. Nowadays one starts at the top and simply hopes to remain there; few indeed of our Valkyries would dare expose their weaknesses in such a program as Miss Traubel has chosen. She has not been one hundred percent successful, partly because her great voice has been over-amplified and the recording balance is not up to the best of recent operatic releases, and partly because it would seem that two of the arias are simply not for her. *Or sai chi l'onore* must have vocal buoyancy as well as declamatory venom, but Miss Traubel does not succeed in producing either. The lovely *Otello* aria wants a lighter and more lyric quality than she can give it, especially with the orchestra so far in the background. And *Voi lo sapete* is one aria in which a full load of Italian sound and fury is not too much—we want a little sobbing and we want the heavy chest tones of a Ponselle or a Bonin-

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segna. On the other hand it is good to hear *Ritorna vincitor*, *Suicidio* and *Vissi d'arte* sung as cleanly as she does them. For the most part, then, this set can be recommended.

—P.L.M.

NEW SONGS OF PALESTINE: (Arr. by A. W. Binder): *We Have the Strength* (Erzachi); *Israel's Heroes*; *Song of the Signal Men* (Pugatzov); *Song of Faith*; *Song of the Jewish Partisans*; *Song of the Emek* (Lavri); *The Way!* (Zaira); sung by the International Chorus, direction of A. W. Binder. Keynote set K-139, three 10-inch discs, price \$3.00.

▲ This is a timely album of songs, for it gives us a glimpse into the musical expression of one part of the world which is very much in the news. These are songs to sing rather than to perform in concert, and it is their spirit and meaning which make them important. According to the Keynote announcement sheet "The songs themselves are those which are being sung today in Palestine by a new generation of Jewish men and women, who, in fulfilling their destiny of rebuilding the Holy Land, have brought with them a tremendous capacity for song. The melodies in this album draw upon the music of the exile, upon Arabic and Yemenite music for their foundation. Some are resistance songs, others songs of work and hope, and all are a brilliant, exuberant contribution to our own recorded masterpieces." The chorus sings with great conviction to a piano accompaniment. The recording has been successfully accomplished. —P.L.M.

A NIGHT AT CARNEGIE HALL: *Lakmé*: *Bell Song* (Delibes); sung by Lily Pons (soprano) with orchestra, direction of Pietro Cimara; *Carmen-Seguidilla and Duet* (Bizet); sung by Risë Stevens (mezzo-soprano) and Raoul Jobin (tenor) with Metropolitan Opera House Orchestra, direction of George Sebastian; *Samson et Dalila*: *Mon Coeur s'ouvre à la voix* (Saint Saëns); sung by Risë Stevens (mezzo-soprano) with Metropolitan Opera House Orchestra, direction of Fausto Cleva; *Simon Boccanegra*: *Il lacerato spirto* (Verdi); *Don Giovanni*: *Serenata, Deh vieni alla finestra* (Mozart); sung by Ezio Pinza (bas-

so) with Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, direction of Fausto Cleva; *Don Giovanni*: *Finch' han dal vino* (Mozart); sung by Ezio Pinza (basso) with Rosa Linda at the piano. Columbia set M or MM-676, three discs, price \$4.00.

▲ I believe several of these arias will be found to be repeats from former Columbia releases. To one who does not follow the activities of Hollywood it may seem odd to come on an obviously Metropolitan Opera program under the title *Carnegie Hall*, but surely none of our readers will require an explanation. I understand the film built around New York's famous concert center has practically taken over the musical *Who's Who* for its cast of characters, and so most any offering of any well known performer would fit into this recorded program. Miss Pon's *Bell Song* is one of her most celebrated offerings, and with good reason, for there are not many arias in which she sounds so brilliant. The Stevens Carmen, mannered though it may be, has plenty of spirit and not a little vocal beauty; her Dalila is tonally less steady and suffers from some vowel distortion. Considering that this heroine was perhaps the most calculating female of all time, Miss Stevens seems to me to overdo in intensity—surely her calculation should include the smoothest of vocal lines. Since she sings both stanzas of the air she cannot allow herself much time for special effects.

Mr. Pinza's account of the fine Verdi air is good, though not so broad and moving as Kipnis' (Victor 8684). His new version of the *Don Giovanni* pieces calls for much the same criticism as did his earlier recording (Victor 1467) made many years ago. His intonation in the *Serenata* was hardly a model, and it is somewhat less perfect here. In both recordings he is happily accompanied by a mandolin in the orchestra, and in both I miss the *appoggiatura* in the first phrase. The new *Fin ch' han dal vino* has, for some reason, a piano background, and the postlude is cut. As always, Pinza takes this little thriller at a terrific pace, thus sacrificing complete melodic definition, which makes for excitement but not for perfection. This is a day of bargain-counter record albums—here are four of the Met's leading singers in, on the whole, good representative performances.

—P.L.M.

OFFENBACH: *The Tales of Hoffman: Barcarolle; Romance of Antonia: Elle a fui, la Tourterelle*; sung by Jarmila Novotna (soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra, direction of Frieder Weissmann. Victor disc 11-9263, price \$1.00.

▲ After her very lovely performance of Dvorák's *Songs My Mother Taught Me* and the *Cradle Song* from Smetana's *Hubicka* (Victor 11-9153—Miss Novotna's latest effort is a real disappointment. In the first place, if we are to have the thrice familiar *Barcarolle* at all, why should it not be done as a duet as it is in the opera? In the second place the singer's tone is here rather dry, her French none too Parisian and her style mannered. To cap it all she is over-recorded, a fault increasingly unusual in Victor's recent operatic releases. The pathetic little *Romance* which the consumptive Antonia sings in the last act of Offenbach's opera suffers from all the same faults, plus a too passionate utterance where all should have been simple. Old timers will remember the neatness of the line which Bori brought to this air on her old acoustic disc (Victor 6049). Quite plainly Miss Novotna could have come much closer to this effect if she had not worked so hard.

—P.L.M.

ORATORIO ARIAS: *The Messiah: Why Do the Nations (Handel); The Creation: Now Heaven in Fullest Glory Shone (Haydn); Saint Matthew Passion: Give Me Back My Lord (Bach); Saint Paul: O God Have Mercy upon Me (Mendelssohn); Elijah: Lord God of Abraham; Elijah: It Is Enough (Mendelssohn)*; sung by Norman Cordon (bass-baritone) with RCA Victor Orchestra, direction of Sylvan Levin; violin obbligato in the Bach by Joseph Fuchs. Victor M-1094, three discs, price \$3.85.

▲ Mr. Cordon, long a dependable member of the Metropolitan Opera Company, is now appearing in Kurt Weill's musical adaptation of *Street Scene*. In this set of records he returns to another department of his repertoire, adding his bit to the various Victor anthologies of oratorio arias which now represent all four of the principal types of voices. A singer of Cordon's experience must have had frequent occasion to sing all of these arias, and in the past he has always been at the

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very least a competent and satisfying singer. Reluctantly, therefore, I admit to considerable disappointment in these discs. Obviously the basso was out of voice when they were made, and the rather coarse recording is well below Victor's recent standard. This is particularly unfortunate since records of this type of music are none too plentiful, and there is room for a good set of this kind. The style throughout is cumbersome and heavy, and the voice is unsteady and uncertain in pitch.

—P.L.M.

SPIRITUALS: Poor Me (Arr. Dett); **Hold On** (Arr. Hall Johnson); sung by Marian Anderson (contralto) with piano accompaniments by Franz Rupp. Victor 10-inch disc, price 75c.

▲ Miss Anderson here gives us a study in contrasts. *Poor Me* is a big and broad melody, but one which takes kindly to the soft and reserved treatment she gives it, singing almost entirely in her warm and rich lower register. *Hold On* is more ordinary, typical of the countless spiritual arrangements with which every one of us is familiar. Surely the singer does it as well as we are ever likely to hear it done, and surely it is effective in its way. But in *Poor Me* Miss Anderson gives us something truly her own, something which even the best of her colleagues could not duplicate. And for this alone the record is well worth owning.

—P.L.M.

In The Popular Vein

By Enzo Archetti

Duke Ellington At Carnegie Hall—Duke Ellington and His Famous Orchestra. Musicraft Album S-6; 4-10" discs. Personnel: William "Cat" Anderson, Harold Baker, Shelton Hemphill, Taft Jordan, Francis Williams, trumpets; Lawrence Brown, Wilbur De Paris, Claude Jones, trombones; Harry Carney, baritone sax; Johnny Hodges, alto sax; Al Sears, tenor sax; Russell Procope, sax; Ray Nance, trumpet and violin; Freddy Guy, guitar; Oscar Pettiford, string bass; Sonny Greer, drums; Marion Cox, Al Hibbler, Kay Davis, vocalists.

● Once a year at Carnegie Hall in New York, Duke Ellington presents to the music world the results of his newest explorations in American

jazz. These annual Ellington concerts occupy an important place in each jazz year. In fact, they have taken on the nature of an annual festival, and are eagerly awaited events. They forecast the trend in jazz of years to come, for the Duke is a leader in more ways than one.

The first of the Carnegie Hall concerts took place in 1943 and it was sold out weeks in advance, and each year it has been the same story.

There are six numbers here from those memorable concerts. *Overture To A Jam Session* (a Strayhorn work) is intended to be impressionistic rather than realistic since a jam session is never played by a large band nor is it composed in advance. No one man is in the limelight except Ray Nance who has a brief moment on the violin. It is impeccably played. *Beautiful Indians* is a two-part Ellington work subtitled *Hiawatha* and *Minnehaha*. It is much more Ellington than Indian. The first part serves as a vehicle for Al Sears individual style on tenor sax. It is not as interesting as the second part which is a delightful vocalise by Kay Davis against a smooth, soft Ellington background. Miss Davis possesses a remarkably well-trained voice which is a joy to hear. *Flippant Flurry* and *The Golden Feather* were designed to feature Jimmy Hamilton, a clarinetist young both in years and in service with the Duke and Harry Carney, baritone saxophonist, who is not old in years but a veteran with the Duke and one of the cornerstones of the orchestra. The titles convey the nature of the compositions. *Sultry Sunset* is cut to order for Johnny Hodges and his sultry sax. It glows. *Jam-A-Ditty* is subtitled a *Concerto for Four Jazz Horns*—a previous year's composition it has proved so popular that it had to be repeated at the 1946 concert. It features Jimmy Hamilton's clarinet, Taft Jordan's trumpet, Harry Carney's baritone sax, and Lawrence Brown's trombone. It sizzles.

Magneta Haze (Ellington) and *Tulip or Turnip* (Ellington); Duke Ellington and His Orchestra. Musicraft 483. *Trumpet No End* and *It Shouldn't Happen To A Dream*; Duke Ellington and His Orchestra. Musicraft 484. (See above for personnel)

● These discs were presumably made at the same session as the Carnegie set for they continue the spirit and mood. *Magneta Haze* is another all-Hodges work dripping with golden saxophone tones while *Tulip or Turnip* is a bouncy number featuring Ray Nance's singing. He is the clown of the orchestra who can sing as well as play violin and trumpet with impish glee. This number suits him well. *Trumpet No End* is Irving Berlin's *Blue Skies* in a swing version that should end all swing versions of this number. It's brilliant. *It Shouldn't Happen To A Dream*, a sentimental number several notches below Ellington's level, features Al Hibbler, the blind vocalist of the band. Hibbler is one of the serious weaknesses of the Ellington Orchestra, in my estimation.

These are the first of Ellington's recordings

for Muscraft with whom he is now associated. Technically, they are very fine and compare favorably with the best he made for Victor and Columbia, but the surfaces are not always equal to what we have a right to expect today.

Will Bradley and His Orchestra: Boogie Woogie; featuring Ray McKinley and Freddie Slack. Columbia Album C-123; 4-10" discs.

● Will Bradley is generally credited with having popularized boogie woogie, an essentially Negro jazz form. In fact, after his *Beat Me Daddy Eight To The Bar* became almost overnight a national success, he was erroneously credited by some over-enthusiastic and misinformed critics with having created this music form. His well-trained orchestra, slick piano playing of Freddie Slack, solid drumming of Ray McKinley, and screwy titles have earned him a well deserved place in the jazz world. It is only when some genuine Negro boogie is heard immediately following Bradley's versions that their shallowness becomes apparent. Yet as entertainment, they have their place.

Columbia has assembled some of the best examples of Bradley's boogie in this set—*Beat Me Daddy; Scrub Me, Mama, With A Boogie Beat; Fry Me Cookie, With A Can of Lard; Chicken Gumboogie; Down the Road a Piece; Celery Stalks At Midnight;* and *Boogie Woogie Conga*. This last is the weakest in the set. Its style and music don't jell.

A Date With Dinah; Dinah Shore, with chorus and orchestra directed by Morris Stoloff. Columbia Album C-125; 4-10" discs.

● A delightful cross-section of Dinah Shore's many faceted art. She certainly has a knack in putting over a song whether it be jazz, sentimental ballad, or folk music. Hear her in *Dixie* and *The Kerry Dance* in this album, if you are not yet convinced. And listen to *I've Got You Under My Skin*, for Dinah at her most insinuating manner, *They Didn't Believe Me* and *Can't Help Loving That Man* in her saddest, and then *There'll Be Some Changes Made* in her brightest. A well-planned, well-presented album!

Eileen: Selections (Victor Herbert); Victor Album K-2; 4-10" discs.

Sweethearts: Selections (Victor Herbert); Victor Album P-174; 4-10" discs. Cast for both albums: Earl Wrightson, Frances Greer, Jimmie Carroll, Christina Lind, and the Guild Choristers, with Al Goodman and His Orchestra.

● Two well-devised, well-sung, and well-recorded albums. The singers are more than equal to the demands of the music. The *Sweethearts* set is based on the Paula Stone—Michael Sloane production now current on Broadway. *Eileen* sounds like the original. I suspect that a good share of the credit for the success of these albums goes to the ubiquitous Al Goodman who seems to be able to handle everything

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from operetta and light symphonic works to the popular drivel of the day with equal facility. In my estimation, Victor and all concerned deserve applause for these two fine sets.

Frasquita Serenade (Lehar) and *I Miss That Feeling*; Dick Jergens and His Orchestra. Vocal by Jimmy Castle. Columbia 37253.

• It's surprising what good jump music the Lehar piece makes! In spite of its new tempo you'll recognize it. Incidentally, it is 100 per cent instrumental: no vocal. The flipover is more conventional in all respects, including vocal, but its smoothly paced for dancing.

Keb-Lah and You'll Never Know; Harry James and His Orchestra. Columbia 37264.

• The trombonist, who has the lion's share in *Keb-Lah*, sounds very much like Juan Tizol but I have no personnel listing to check that. The piece is a first cousin to Tizol's *Caravan* in rhythm and melody. The label says the composers are "Tizol—H. James". Everything seems to add up like 2 and 2. The result is very satisfying. The reverse is an all instrumental piece, with plenty of James trumpet to satisfy his fans. Well done!

Anniversary Song (from *The Jolson Story*) and *Heartaches, Sadness, and Tears*; Dinah Shore, with Spade Cooley and His Orchestra. Columbia 37234.

Anniversary Song (from *The Jolson Story*) sung by Kate Smith. *If I Had My Life To Live Over*; Kate Smith, with Four Chicks and Chuck. Both sides with Orchestra conducted by Jack Miller. M-G-M 10003.

• I suppose people will prefer and buy Al Jolson's recording of the *Anniversary Song* if only for sentimental reasons or as a souvenir of the picture. But both these versions are well done. Shore's is more like Al Jolson's. Kate Smith takes hers at about half speed and lays the sentiment on thickly. She has better support from her orchestra and better recording. Incidentally, has anyone yet associated this number with Ivanovici and his *Danube Waves* on which this piece was based? I haven't seen a label yet which has given him any credit.

The flipover of the Dinah Shore disc seems to be a play to capitalize on the current popularity of *Heartaches*, being very much in the same vein. Kate Smith's reverse is more interesting, though dangerously close to being over-sentimental-as many of her songs are. Technically, the M-G-M is better. In fact, this is the first month of any of this new brand has come my way and their quality-recording, material, and surfaces—are excellent.

Heartaches and *There Is No Greater Love*; Jimmy Dorsey and His Orchestra. Vocals by Bob Carroll and Dee Parker. M-G-M 1001.

• Bob Carroll has an appealing, agreeable voice. His treatment of that revived bit of

corn, *Heartaches*, makes it quite enjoyable although Jimmy Dorsey deserves some of the credit for his smooth, rhythmic support. The palm goes to Jimmy, not Bobby, on the reverse, for an interesting presentation.

Snowfall and Autumn Nocturne; Claude Thornhill and His Orchestra. Columbia 37271.

• Very neat! It's easy to imagine Debussy turning out a number like *Snowfall*, if he were writing today in the modern idiom. It has imagination, atmosphere, and a certain feeling. It's a Thornhill original and his theme-song. *Autumn Nocturne* is almost as fine. It sounds like a good Glenn Miller. This really shouldn't be missed by anyone.

Old Devil Moon (from *Finian's Rainbow*) and *Same Old Blues*; Gene Krupa and His Orchestra. Vocal by Carolyn Grey. Columbia 37270.

• It's difficult to recognize the usually noisy and rowdy Gene in this one—both sides—but particularly in *Old Devil Moon*. I find that *Old Devil Moon* is the best number from *Finian's Rainbow*—*Glocca Morra* notwithstanding.

From Duet to Sextet

(Continued from page 269)

still easy to find, is the only duet the two women ever recorded.

In April, too, the series of duets by Alma Gluck and Louise Homer was continued in a fashion worthy of their high standard with two excerpts from *Hänsel und Gretel*: *Suse, liebe Suse* (89099) and the Witches Dance, *Hexenritt und Knusperwalzer*. These were soon followed by *Der kleine Sandmann bin ich*, also from the Humperdinck opera (89100 and later doubled with 89099 on 8030). In May appeared their popular recording of Monk's *Abide with me*. The three selections from *Hänsel und Gretel* are still favorites with many collectors.

The outstanding duet issued during May, 1913 was *Ange adorable* from *Romeo et Juliette*, sung by Geraldine Farrar and Edmond Clement (88421 or 89113 or 8020). Gounod's bland music, in this instance, seems inconsequential, but these two artists, and ideal recording team, make it enjoyable listening, thanks to their beautiful voices and stylistic refinement. (See the editor's comments in his article, *Romeo and Juliet in Music*, in the July, 1946 issue.)

(To be Continued)

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GYPSY MUSIC OR HUNGARIAN MUSIC?.....	BELA BARTOK
EDITORIAL.....	P.H.L.
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